

Message Text

SECRET

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20/43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 SY-10 EB-11

COME-00 CAB-09 FAA-00 DRC-01 /132 W

----- 121326

O R 171415Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9805

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 7297

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT TEXT PARA 1. LINE ONE)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : MOPS, IS SY

SUBJECT : ISRAEL-SYRIAN AIR CLASH

REF: A) STATE 183045; B) USDAO TEL AVIV MSG 1385 DTG

171010 SEPT 73

1. REF A EXPRESSED DEPARTMENT INTEREST IN ANSWERS TO THREE QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO SEPT. 13 AIR CLASH BETWEEN ISRAELI AND SYRIAN WAR PLANES. QUESTIONS WERE ADDRESSED IN REF B BUT WILL BE MORE SPECIFICALLY ANSWERED HERE.

A. THERE WERE ACTUALLY TWO SEPARATE RECON FLIGHTS. EACH FLIGHT CONSISTED OF TWO RECON CONFIGURED F-4S AND TWO ESCORT F-4S. FIRST FLIGHT PENETRATED SYRIAN AIRSPACE JUST NORTH OF LEBANESE-SYRIAN BORDER, FLEW ARC WITHIN SYRIA AND DEPARTED SYRIAN AIRSPACE JUST NORTH OF TARTUS. DATT ESTIMATES FLIGHT WITHIN SYRIAN AIRSPACE COVERED APPROXIMATELY 100 NAUTICAL MILES TOTAL. TIME SPENT IN SYRIAN AIRSPACE SHOULD HAVE BEEN LESS THAN 15 MINUTES AND DEEPEST PENETRATION DID NOT EXCEED 50

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NAUTICAL MILES. SECOND FLIGHT FLEW ROUTE PARALLEL TO SYRIAN

COAST AND 6 MILES OUT TO SEA.

B. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ESCORT AIRCRAFT MENTIONED IN PARA A ABOVE, TOP COVER AIRCRAFT DID NOT ACCOMPANY RECON AIRCRAFT. ORBIT STATIONS FOR THESE TOP COVER AIRCRAFT WERE OVER INTER-NATIONAL WATERS. THESE WERE THE AIRCRAFT THAT ENGAGED IN THE FIRST BATTLE.

C. THE IDF THINKS THAT ENTIRE FIRST BATTLE CONDUCTED OVER WATER. NONETHELESS ONE CANNOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF INADVERTANT PENETRATION IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE. IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT PART OF SECOND BATTLE MAY HAVE BEEN FOUGHT OVER COASTAL REGION. AT LEAST TWO SYRIAN PILOTS, WHO BAILED OUT, ACTUALPQANDED ON THE LAND WHICH CLEARLY SUGGESTS THAT THE BATTLE ZONE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN VERY FAR OFF THE COAST.

2. EMBASSY HAS NOT CONTACTED MFA ON SUBJECT SINCE DEPARTMENT DID NOT ASK THAT WE FOLLOW UP ITS REQUEST TO ISRAELI EMBASSY, AND WE WERE ALREADY PROMISED IDF BRIEFINGS AND DID NOT WANT TO CONFUSE CHANNELS. AFTER ISRAELI EMBASSY REPLIES, WE SHOULD HAVE A CLEARER IDEA OF WHAT ADDITIONAL ACTION, IF ANY, MIGHT BE REQUIRED HERE.
KEATING

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NNN

Message Attributes

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